

Contributed

BAPTIST CHURCH HISTORY AS EXHIBITED IN THEIR RECENT WRITINGS.

V.

In closing this review of Baptist church history it is but proper to notice the debt of the Baptists to the Presbyterian Church, and in doing this by way of summary a bare statement from Dr. Newman may not be amiss: "As regards the * * doctrines * * *. The medieval evangelical sects were all apparently anti-Augustinian, and the Baptist parties of the sixteenth century followed in the footsteps of their medieval spiritual ancestors in this and other important particulars. Those Baptist parties of modern times whose historical relations with the medieval evangelical parties and the anti-Pedobaptist parties of the sixteenth century are most intimate have rejected the Calvinistic system; while those that owe their origin to English Puritanism * * * have been noted for their staunch adherence to Calvinistic principles." * * * Calvinistic and Arminian Baptists have both had periods of extreme development, the former sometimes scarcely escaping fatalism and anti-nomianism, the latter sometimes falling into Socinian denial of the deity of Christ and Pelagian denial of original sin. The great majority of the Baptists of to-day hold to what may be called moderate Calvinism." (Hist., pp. 5, 6.)

That the Baptists were much influenced, especially in their advocacy of Arminianism in the United States and the temporary adoption of episcopacy, by the Methodists, Dr. Newman freely acknowledges. But it should be noticed that Arminianism prevailed among the Baptists before Wesleyanism arose. The Presbyterian Church has consistently, throughout all its modern career from the days of Calvin, been zealous advocates of Calvinism, of missions and of an educated ministry. Of the earliest Calvinistic creed of the anti-Pedobaptists in England (1644) Dr. Newman attributes the origin of this to the conversion of some Puritans to anti-Pedobaptism. Of the next creed adopted by them he writes, in "1677": "A confession of faith, that of the Westminster Assembly, with necessary modifications, was adopted and formally promulgated." "In 1689 * * * representatives of about a hundred churches assembled for the * * * reaffirming of the confession of 1677." (New Schoff-Herzog, Vol. 1, p. 464.) Of Andrew Fuller he writes that he influenced John Foster, and Robert Hall, William Carey and others, and was a leader to diffuse "the missionary spirit," and yet this man was converted to "evangelical views chiefly through the reading of a pamphlet by Jonathan Edwards." (Idem, p. 465.) He attributes much of the strength of the Baptists in England, Scotland and Ireland to Alexander Carson, who was a "Presbyterian." Of the Baptists in the United States he says "more than a hundred churches united"

"in 1689" "in adopting a Baptist recension of the Westminster Confession, which has proved the most important and influential confession ever put forth by Baptists. In a slightly modified form it has been widely accepted by American Baptists as 'the Philadelphia Confession.'" (Hist., p. 55.)

Many of those who were the most influential workers of the church in the East and New England during the latter half of the eighteenth century were educated at Princeton, where they fell under the influence of the leaders of the Presbyterian Church. (See Hist., pp. 277, 301, 322, etc.)

In their struggle for religious liberty, for which the Baptists claim so much, and much credit for which is due them, Dr. Newman attributes much to the leadership of "Patrick Henry, the noted Presbyterian lawyer and statesman," under whose "advice" many Baptists acted. He continues: "Baptists and Presbyterians co-operated heartily for the overthrow of the established religion." (Pp. 366, 367.)

From these quotations and many others which have been spared to avoid repetition it appears (1) that the Baptists are indebted to the early fathers of the Presbyterian Church for the influences that led them to adopt a Calvinistic theology; (2) that for the form of their theological creed, which has proved the most important and influential confession ever put forth by Baptists, they are entirely indebted to the Presbyterian Westminster Confession of Faith; (3) that for the early influences leading them to secure and adopt an educated ministry which only could command the respect of the modern religious world, they are indebted to Presbyterians; (4) that for their counsel and chief supporters in their struggle for religious freedom in this country they are indebted to the Presbyterians.

Apropos of these comments it is a matter worthy of special interest to Presbyterians to read the following from Dr. A. H. Newman's pen: "Retaining the very effective Presbyterian discipline, and educating evangelists under strong Presbyterian influence, the Presbyterians of Tennent's school showed little susceptibility to the influence of Baptist principles. It is a historical fact, account for it as we may, that ground once preoccupied by Presbyterians is relatively irresponsive to Baptist effort." (Hist., p. 273.)

S. M. Tenney.

Troupe, Texas, February 10, 1909.

LAYMEN'S MISSIONARY MOVEMENT.

The Conference at Crystal Springs, Miss., was held on July 14, 15, 1909. There were enrolled twenty-seven ministers and sixty-eight laymen. The chairman was Mr. R. F. Kimmons, of Water Valley. Valuable addresses were heard from Rev. H. M. Edmonds, of Montgomery, Ala., on "The Laymen's Movement;" by Rev. J. O. Reavis, on "The Call of Personal Sacrifice for the World's Evangelization;" by Rev. J. J.

Chisolm, of Natchez, on "Missionary Enterprise and a Blessed Hope;" by Mr. Calvin Wells, Jr., of Jackson, on "The Motives of Missionary Endeavor," and by Dr. T. H. Somerville, of Oxford, on "Missions the Only Enduring Basis of Civilization." Dr. S. H. Chester spoke on "The Outlook for Missions in the Foreign Field," with special reference to the work being now done and planned for the near future by the Southern Presbyterian Church. Dr. J. B. Hutton, of Jackson, took for his theme "Men for the Man of Galilee."

The chairman then named the following Committee on Resolutions. It reported as follows: Prof. A. L. Bondurant, chairman; Dr. W. H. Whitaker, John A. Stinson, L. T. Carlisle, William McBride, E. W. Melvin, A. Lotterhos, R. L. Byrnes, W. R. Evans and J. C. Calhoun.

Adjourned until 2 p. m.

In the afternoon the Committee on Resolutions made a report through its chairman, Prof. A. L. Bondurant, as follows:

"We, men from the Synod of Mississippi, of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, assembled at Lake Chatouqua, Mississippi, in our second Annual Conference, give our unqualified sanction to the plan for the evangelization of the world in a generation, which has been endorsed by our General Assembly, urged at the first Laymen's Conference held at this place one year ago, and championed by the Laymen's Convention of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, held in Birmingham, Ala., February, 1909.

"We are grateful for the substantial progress which has been made in this Synod during the past year, and would urge—

"That the plans proposed to accomplish this great work be presented to those at home by both laymen and ministers who are in attendance upon this Conference; and, to hasten the end so devoutly desired, be it resolved—

"First—That in private and public worship—in the church, Sunday-school and Brotherhood meetings—we urge the sacredness and importance of this cause, invoking upon it the blessing of God, and instructing our people as to its importance.

"Secondly—That we recommend the appointment of a Missionary Committee in each congregation, whose business it will be to present this cause to the members of the congregation individually, with a view to arousing them to a greater interest in the work.

"Thirdly—We recommend that the work of instruction along missionary lines in the various congregations be systematically done, and that the members be invited and urged to make weekly contributions to the cause of missions.

"Fourthly—We would pledge ourselves to renewed efforts in Christian work as the divinely ordered means for quickening our own hearts and the hearts and consciences of our brethren, and we would urge renewed zeal in the study of